



"The Department of Energy has an urgent role to play in creating a new, clean energy economy that will spark job creation and reduce our dependence on oil, while cutting our greenhouse gas emissions. The Department will also meet its critical responsibilities of reducing nuclear dangers and environmental risks. The foundation of all our work is a commitment to lead the world in science, technology and engineering."

- Secretary Steven Chu

This mission serves as the underlying narrative in all of our online communications. In addition to showcasing our innovators and innovations, we will also enumerate why that matters to our audiences. For that reason, all our online communications must strive to define who we are, what we do, and further -- **why it matters**.

Process for Submissions

Principals and program offices are enthusiastically encouraged to submit content for consideration on Energy.gov and our official social media channels. Before drafting the article, work with your office's Digital Communications representative (see "Who should I send my submission to?") to determine if the story is right for Energy.gov's blog. If your contact approves of your story pitch, use the tips and narrative guidance that Digital Communications has provided to develop the article. Program offices should submit final, fact-checked and internally approved posts to the appropriate Digital Communications staff for evaluation. Once submitted, Digital Communications staff will work with program offices to further develop posts as needed for publication.

Your article will then be categorized as one of the following types for the Energy.gov website:

- **Blog** – While all Energy.gov articles are listed under the blog feed on the homepage, Energy.gov articles catalogued as "blog" are announcements and/or other items of immediate interest (like an event or FOA). These pieces are relevant only for a short time.
- **Energy Profile** – These articles showcase an individual, organization or company and their perspective/story about the Department's work. This content is considered "evergreen," i.e. relevant for a minimum of several months and include compelling multimedia (video or photo galleries).
- **Energy Today** – Articles that are "practical and now" and have measurable results or impact to the U.S. or rest of the world. This content is also considered "evergreen" and includes multimedia.
- **Energy Tomorrow** -- Forward-facing articles that address the future (i.e. innovative research projects or breakthroughs that will impact future generations) are classified as Energy Tomorrow. This is another type of "evergreen" content that includes multimedia.

Who should I send my submission to?

The following Digital Communications staff members manage the topic areas listed below. Work with your office's communications representative to get your post cleared through the proper channels before sending to one of the following contacts:



- [Amanda Scott](#): Science education, Environmental Management, Fossil, CCS/CCUS, Staff & Contractors
- [Michael Hess](#): Science (technology, basic and applied science, commercialization), technology transfer, smart grid, National Labs
- [Rebecca Matulka](#): Energy efficiency, vehicles, Energy Savers
- [Erin Pierce](#): Renewable energy sources, loan program, policy & international affairs
- [Matthew Loveless](#): Maps and graphs, data visualization
- [April Saylor](#): Nuclear energy and security

Before submitting, cross-check your post with the below checklist to ensure quality and consistency across Energy.gov. In addition to sending the final, office-approved blog post, also include author byline, multimedia content (high resolution photo or video) and video/photo credit. Failure to send everything at once could delay the article's posting date. When the final articles are sent, there is limited availability to add additional edits, and all content is subject to the approval of HQ Public Affairs for final clearance. All articles must be incorporated into Digital Communications' Editorial Calendar, and your Digital Communications contact will work with you on scheduling a post date for your article.

Tips for Online Writing

- ***Be strategic.***
By driving the following two core messages, we can lay the groundwork that will drive the messaging that will best position the United States to win the clean energy innovation race.
 1. We are pursuing an all-of-the-above strategy that develops every source of American energy -- a strategy that reduces costs for consumers, better protects our air and water, and provides for true energy independence for the United States.
 2. The clean energy industry generates hundreds of billions in economic activity, and is expected to continue to grow rapidly in the coming years. There is tremendous economic opportunity for the countries that invent, manufacture and export clean energy technologies. The U.S. can and should win the global race for clean energy technologies.
- ***Stay organized.***
Pieces should have an engaging beginning, an informative middle and a solid finish. Be sure to cover who, what, when, where, why and how in the article. Conclusions are often forgotten in blog posts, especially for people who come into the business from writing press releases, but they're essential too -- you want the reader to remember your point, and even come back!
- ***Choose the best voice.***
Think about who is the best validator for your message. Usually, this is your principal, but there will certainly be times when it is not. With this in mind, make sure that whomever you are representing (whether it is yourself or someone else), do your best to speak with that person's voice.



- **Blogs are news too.**
Find a 'news' hook if you can. How does this topic relate to something else that happened today, or the day before? A quick Google search is usually reliable here.
- **Tell your story.**
These posts are an opportunity for your principals and your programs to "be themselves." It is a place where things like anecdotes, stories and some of the more human elements of our work can and should come to life. Keep in mind that unlike writing to a press list for 'traditional' media, you're writing to the people who read our website.
- **Engage your readers.**
Your first line should be a hook that will grab readers' attention -- and keep it. With today's "information overload," ledes are more important than ever. That first sentence is your one chance to grab your reader's attention and encourage them to read more.
- **Clarity and simplicity.**
Keep your article clear and easy to understand. The general public is a main audience, and it is easy for us to get bogged down in "shop talk." Always check and scientific statements. Sometimes a little explanation (or link!) goes a long way. Avoid using "hype" (leading, best, extraordinary etc.) in articles. Instead include facts or stats to support your statements.
- **Quantity matters.**
In general, blog posts should be short -- approximately 350-500 words on average. But do not let word counts stand in the way of telling your story in the best way possible. Some can be short -- maybe a few sentences are all that's needed to plug a video or another link. Some can be longer to explain a technology or policy. If you think your story can be told better using visuals, think beyond a typical blog post! Energy.gov was built to showcase slideshows and videos...and often only a paragraph is needed to accompany multimedia.
- **Good Keywords.**
Supplying the Office of Digital Communications with accurate and ample key words that describe the content and the nature of your post will help us be able to (1) better categorize our content; (2) shape how we think of future messaging efforts; and (3) make your post as 'search engine optimized' (SEO) as possible.

Article checklist

- Body
 - Post flows sensibly, I understand all words
 - All sentences are grammatically correct and the post has been spellchecked.
 - All em-dashes are double dashes (--)
 - All numbers and stats have been verified.
- Search Engine Optimization
 - Are your title and links SEO friendly/maximized?
 - Have you identified any additional keywords?
- Make sure all links work and direct readers to the appropriate page.
- Ensure the post truly reflects the author's voice.
- Identify the role or title of the author has been identified to the Digital Communications team.



- Ensure that your principal has signed off on the draft.
- ***Please note: Digital Communications will not accept an article without some accompanying form of multimedia (photo, video, infographic, slideshow, etc.).***

Photos

- Did you include a caption and a photo credit?
- Is your photo is the highest resolution available?

Video

- Is there a video that can be associated with the post?
- Is the video captioned?
- Include a there a transcript available?

Other DOE social media channels

With many people now using social media channels to interact with government agencies in addition to official websites, the Department uses several other platforms to communicate with the public. With the constant expansion of the internet, this is an evolving list:

	Web Address	DOE Best Practices
Facebook	facebook.com/energygov	energy.gov/facebook
Twitter - @ENERGY	twitter.com/#!/ENERGY	energy.gov/flickr
Flickr	flickr.com/photos/departmentofenergy	energy.gov/twitter
YouTube	youtube.com/energygov	energy.gov/youtube
SlideShare	slideshare.net/energy	
Storify	storify.com/energy	

Different types of content may be better suited for a Twitter audience than a SlideShare user, or Facebook followers rather than the Energy.gov blog -- and the Digital Communications team will work with you to promote your content via the most appropriate platform available. For more social media guidance, visit energy.gov/about-us/web-policies/social-media.

Examples of good articles

The post below by Charles Rousseaux, a Senior Writer in the Office of Science, has a human-interest first line for a good hook, there are numerous well placed links for additional information, and uses quotes and examples to mark the importance of the research.

[Dark Energy Cam: Fermilab Expands Understanding of Expanding Universe](#)

Breaking down is often an essential part of building up. Athletes break down their muscles during hard workouts to build stronger ones for better performances. Construction workers tear down ruins to build skyscrapers. And scientists find flaws in accepted theories and use them to build even better models of how nature actually works.



"Creative destruction," is the term that Joseph Schumpeter coined for the process, which he applied to economics. But scientists at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab) are applying it in a rather more literal way through their work in leading the Dark Energy Survey (DES).

The [Dark Energy Survey](#) is "designed to probe the origin of the accelerating universe and help uncover the nature of dark energy by measuring the 14-billion-year history of cosmic expansion with high precision."

Let's back up and break that down. About 80 years ago, an astronomer named Edwin Hubble discovered that the universe was expanding. And for the next 50 years or so, scientists figured – based on well-founded evidence – that gravity would gradually slow the expansion down.

However, in 1998, two independent teams of scientists, one of which was led by [Dr. Saul Perlmutter](#) of Berkeley National Laboratory, announced that instead of slowing, the universe was actually expanding at an accelerating rate. That made precisely no sense – the equivalent of seeing a shot basketball slowly rise to the top of its arc . . . and then shoot rapidly into the sky – but it seems to be the way the universe began working some five billion years ago.

[Dr. Perlmutter and two others won the 2011 Nobel Prize in Physics](#) for this discovery of the accelerating expansion of the universe, which scientists believe is being driven by a mysterious force called dark energy. And that's what the Dark Energy Camera (DECam) is designed to examine.

The DECam is the largest digital camera ever built, with 570 megapixels, mirrors about three feet across, and a weight of between four and five tons, which puts it in the range of an elephant. DES researchers – yes, Dr. Perlmutter is on the team – recently began shutting down the high-powered Blanco telescope at the [Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory](#) in Chile, so they can install it.

When it sees first light later this year, the camera won't examine dark energy itself. Rather, it will look at dark energy's effects on large scales, on the galaxies racing away from one another across space and time. That will allow the members of the Dark Energy Survey team to make their most accurate picture of the universe yet, and perhaps poke a few holes in today's popular theories along the way.

That's the exuberant and sometimes painful process of creative destruction at work. And that's an essential element of the efforts of the Energy Department's Office of Science: Providing world-class tools to researchers peering deeply into the darkness, breaking down incomplete theories and building a better understanding of our world and universe.

This post by White House Associate Director of Digital Content Megan Slack does well to immediately reference a hot-button issue, and her points are laid out clearly and concisely in three distinct pieces.

[Our Dependence on Foreign Oil Is Declining](#)



America's dependence on foreign oil has gone down every single year since President Obama took office. In 2010, we imported less than 50 percent of the oil our nation consumed—the first time that's happened in 13 years—and the trend continued in 2011.

We're relying less on imported oil for a number of reasons, not least that production is up here in the United States. In fact, America is producing more oil today than at any time in the last eight years. As part of his strategy to increase safe, responsible oil production in the United States, President Obama has opened millions of new acres for oil and gas exploration and we now have more working oil and gas rigs than the rest of the world—combined.

Despite all this, Americans are still paying more at the pump when we fill up. That's because drilling for more oil here at home won't affect the price of gas on its own. Oil is bought and sold on a world market. In the short term, it's subject to price spikes when there's instability or uncertainty along the global supply chain. And growing demand in countries like India, Brazil, and China, which tripled the number of cars on the road in the last five years, will drive prices even higher over the long term.

*So we have to do more than drill now to bring down prices for the future. Relying on the fossil fuels of the last century won't be enough, especially as demand keeps increasing. We need an **all-out, all-of-the-above strategy** that develops every available source of American energy. This includes everything from tapping our offshore oil supplies and vast natural gas reserves, to doubling down on clean energy resources like wind and solar power, and developing new technologies that help us use less energy altogether.*

This is the strategy President Obama has been pursuing since he took office, but there's still more to be done. We need to put in place the right incentives to encourage a clean energy future, and repeal the \$4 billion in annual taxpayer subsidies paid to oil and gas companies. Today in New Hampshire, the President will reiterate his call on Congress to do just that.

*Want to learn more about President Obama's Blueprint for American-made energy? **[Here's everything you need to know.](#)***